

# TennisPro®

The International Magazine for PTR Tennis Teachers and Coaches



January/February 2022



**PTR Symposium Goes West!**

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**Singles Strategies:  
How to Practice Them**

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**Competition Rituals**

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**Make the Most of  
High School Off Season**



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*Cairn University with Coach Kevin Jackson joins PTR Spring Tennis Fest.*

**FEATURES**

- 8** 8 Fundamental Singles Strategies And How To Practice Them  
*Edgar Giffenig*
- 11** About My Tennis Journey  
*Subhan Khan*
- 12** PTR Partners with UF for Certification Course  
**DIRECTOR of RACQUET SPORTS**
- 14** 2022 Tennis Symposium moves to November 10-13 in Indian Wells
- 16** Competition Routines And Rituals For Better Performance  
*Dmytro Kovalevych*
- 20** **Using Games to Keep Practice Fresh & Fun**  
*Mitch Case*
- 22** **Leaders Eat Last**  
*Jarrett Chirico*
- 26** The High School Offseason - When the Magic Happens...or Doesn't  
*Marvin Hedgepeth*

**REGULAR FEATURES**

- 4** For the Record
- 5** Member News
- 6** Masters of Tennis
- 30** International Member News
- 33** Playmate Ask the Expert



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*Dan Santorum*  
Dan Santorum  
CEO/Executive Director

With the successes and trials of 2021 just a memory now, we turn our attention to 2022. Years from now, when we look back, 2021 will be viewed in various ways. Transparency and truthfulness have been a hallmark of PTR from the very beginning 45 years ago. So, let's start with the challenges we faced and end with the positive changes that occurred that will lead us forward in the coming years.

Due mainly to the requirements of USTA accreditation and partially COVID-19 (primarily a tremendous downturn in certification workshop offerings), our membership numbers in the USA dipped to where we finished our membership year in the USA at 7,205 members. The good news is

that moving forward with the support of USTA, the tennis industry, and organizational initiatives, we expect our membership numbers to increase and regain our lost members and more. Despite the postponement of the Symposium, we have never been more confident in our future progress as well as being able to continue to provide you with quality member service and benefits.

So now for the many plusses! One of those new member benefits is a program called "Professional Placement Program – or P3. The program concept is simply, if you are possibly interested in a new opportunity, simply send us your resume. Depending on your position and the positions open, we may share your resume, confidentially, with facilities looking to fill a position.

Hopefully, you are happy and satisfied with your current position. If not, or if you have to relocate, then P3 may be of interest to you. There is no cost to participate.

PTR was very fortunate to financially end the year on the plus side of the ledger in terms of income, mainly due to a strong investment performance. This has allowed the PTR Board at its December meeting to make a decision that will profoundly impact PTR in the future. In 2022, PTR will send out an RFP for a new home for PTR and the other organizations that all comprise the newly formed Professional Sports Registry (PSR).

Having our own office with courts is a topic that has been discussed for more than a decade. For several reasons, now is the time to take a bold step to improve our ability to continue to be the leading organization for coaches around the world. The goal for completion is mid to late 2023. So stay tuned. We welcome your suggestions.

The aforementioned PSR has already made PTR stronger because our industry around the world is becoming a Racquets industry. With the strong growth in pickleball and platform tennis in the USA and padel in Europe and Latin countries, PTR members have added to their knowledge, expertise, and credentials. PTR certification will always be the gold standard at tennis-only facilities. However, for facilities that have had or are planning to add other sports like pickleball, padel, and/or platform tennis, PSR "Dual Impact" and "Triple Threat" professionals will be the norm at facilities that offer more than tennis. We even have a handful of "4-Star" members who have added PCR (padel).

Where amenities have increased, teaching professionals are being asked to be able to deliver more than just tennis. The upside is that PSR pros are better compensated and more valuable to:

- **their employers**
- **their facilities**
- **their students**
- **the manufacturers**
- **the court builders**
- **... the sports themselves**

Almost 1,000 members are now PSR members, and we expect that number to increase significantly in the coming years.

The next item to discuss is PTR's continued progress in terms of diversity. The PTR Board approved more than \$100,000 be given to improve the opportunities for:

- **women coaches**
- **coaches of color**
- **young coaches ages 15 to 23**

Increasing the number of women coaches is an industry goal and PTR is All In. First, as was previously reported, PTR and the WTA agreed to continue their partnership after a successful initial agreement. Both organizations agree that the number of women coaches in the world needs to increase. Together with tennis federations like the USTA, who also share this same view, PTR set out to create two programs to increase the number of women coaches.

Let's start with the PTR/WTA Coach Program. The program has been in place for three years, but in December, the program took another step forward with a pilot program aimed at increasing the number of women who can coach tour-level players. The pilot program, developed by and partially delivered by PTR, COO Brian Parkkonen was a resounding success. We were fortunate to have the assistance from world-leading coach educator, Dr. Anne Pankhurst. Anne's incredible knowledge laid the groundwork for our education moving forward.

On the WTA side, we are fortunate to work with WTA staff member, Mike Anders. Like Brian, Mike's passion has helped lead to programs success. PTR is fortunate the WTA was able to secure the support of former WTA player and Grand Slam Champion Vania King. Vania brings many positive attributes to this program. In addition to being a former WTA player, Vania is a PTR-certified professional and PTRW spokesperson. Assisting in the pilot program was former top-ranked WTA player and US Billie Jean King Cup Coach, Kathy Rinaldi. Also, special thanks to Jay Gooding for hosting the event.

Next is the PTRW Program, which focuses on assisting and getting more women coaches who work with players at the club level PTRW is expertly led at the staff level by Milena Stephens, Director of Education and Diversity.

Finally, we signed a partnership agreement with the University of Florida and their Director of Racquet Sports certification. More information on this program is in this issue of TennisPro, see page 12/13.

I'd like to close by paying tribute to our outgoing Chairman, Karl Hale. It is no secret that his tenure was the most difficult three years of any Chairman in our history. He handled numerous adverse situations with poise, strength, and confidence. Thank you, Karl, for your amazing leadership. You truly Made a World of Difference!

## NEW POSITIONS



### Message from Andy Dowsett, longtime administrator of the PTR UK (GB) office.

The start of 2022 marks the end of an era; after 12 years of heading up PTR in Great Britain and 22 years as a PTR Tutor and Tester, Andy Dowsett, long-time administrator of the PTR UK (GB) office is moving on to other ventures.

Over the years, Andy trained over 3,500 coaches. He was awarded PTRUK Pro of the Year and PTR Clinician of the Year. Andy was a featured presenter and a popular course leader at the PTR Symposium on Hilton Head Island throughout the past decade. He also conducted events in Norway, Rome and many times in London.

Andy will now focus his expertise on Andy Dowsett's System-9 Tennis, (his own methodology of teaching) as well as his online courses and in person CPD courses.

Andy said, "I would like to thank PTR for the opportunity, and for continuing to make a world of difference in the tennis industry. I've got to know many amazing coaches around the world, many of who I now call friends."

PTR would like to thank Andy for his service to help grow PTR UK and the sport of tennis. Always expanding and sharing his knowledge, Andy's work helped pros enhance their careers. We will miss your leadership Andy, but are proud to always have you as part of the PTR Family!

Filling Andy's shoes will be tough, but we have an excellent new Director.

We are delighted to announce that **Emma Wells** will be taking over the role of Director of the PTR UK. Emma has a wealth of experience in tennis both on & off the court, is a tutor & club owner with over 700 weekly members in Wimbledon.



Emma specializes in U10 delivery & has been a speaker for PTR, USPTA, Evolve 9, Coach the Coaches as well as working with the likes of Women's Health Magazine. She was recently interviewed on national television on the ITV This Morning show.

Emma is PTR's first ever female in the role of national director. Kudos to Emma!

"I am excited to take on such a great role for PTR UK, my coaching philosophy is all about connection and community and I cannot wait to meet & evolve the PTR community in the UK and further afield," says Emma.



Longtime PTR Professional, **Lamar Scott** was elected to serve a one-year term as president of the Atlanta Lawn Tennis Association. ALTA is a non-profit organization devoted to the development of recreational leagues in the five-county Atlanta, Georgia metro area. Affiliated with USTA, ALTA abides by the USTA rules of tennis. Just moments before his election was announced, Scott was surprised to receive the Presidential Award honoring his 14-plus years of volunteer service to ALTA. Scott is also an active member of PTR, who has been recognized

as an ACE Hero, as well as awarded Volunteer of the Year. Scott is often seen helping at PTR events, including PTR wheelchair tournaments and Special Olympics.



**Robert Herrera** accepted a position as the Head Tennis Professional at New Orleans Lawn Tennis Club. I cannot thank Wee Burn Country Club enough for the amazing and unforgettable memories I've experienced with the staff and membership throughout the past two years. I have learned so much since I arrived in New York working as the Head Racquet Sports Professional at Mount Kisco Country Club in 2016, and am deeply impacted by the friendships I've made.



I am very excited for what is to come next for me and my family as we leave New England and head down South to Louisiana.

### PTR Extends TennisGate benefit for Members



PTR partners with **TennisGate** to provide you with an excellent online platform using state of the art technology for coaches. PTR members in good standing have free access to [www.ptr.tennishate.com](http://www.ptr.tennishate.com), a special site built as a resource for PTR coaches searching for advice, drills, tips and suggestions on every area of the game.

**TennisGate** is the official technology partner of the German Tennis Federation and also collaborated with the ITF and the Spanish Tennis Federation. Email [Julie@ptrtennis.org](mailto:Julie@ptrtennis.org) to request your free access.

# New Masters of Tennis



The Master of Tennis designation conveys the completion of an extensive training program in one of the following disciplines -- Junior Development, Adult Development or Performance.

The Master of Tennis program is a minimum of 300 hours and is led by PTR Education Consultant, Dr. Anne Pankhurst. The MOT program provides externally based assessment of skills, knowledge and behaviors for coaches. The qualifications match the National Standards for Sports Coaches (NCACE) at the highest level.

Just over 120 professionals worldwide have completed the Master of Tennis Program to date.



*Congratulations!*

**Yulia,  
our youngest female  
Master of Tennis!**

**Yulia Kharitonova** has completed her Master of Tennis – Junior Development! She is the **YOUNGEST** Women to achieve this designation at 27 years of age.

Yulia currently resides in China but is a Russian citizen. She was ranked 68 in Women's Circuit in Australia, before ending her career at the age of 17. She began her coaching career while still competing on the Pro Circuit and taught in various clubs in Australia before taking up a position as a Head Coach at a prestige boarding school in Sydney. Arriving to China in 2016, Yulia has created and developed a tennis academy that now has 6 different branches across China in 5 major cities.



**Oliver "Oli" Mason**, (pictured above), has recently completed his MOT performance qualification with the PTR. He is one of a select few to have received this qualification in the UK. Oli currently coaches at Thorpebay Tennis club and is the performance coach at the club where a current ATP professional also trains and works with many junior players aspiring to get on the ITF / ATP / WTA circuit or gain a scholarship to a D1 college in the US. [business.tennislessons.essex.co.uk](http://business.tennislessons.essex.co.uk)

**He has also achieved PTR Professional Certifications in:**

- **Adult Development**
- **10 & Under Tennis**
- **Junior 11 – 17**
- **Performance**



**Adam Drys** of Poland, (pictured above), has completed his Master of Tennis in Adult Development. Adam is a 10- year Professional with PTR. He operates in a small town Przemysl in south eastern Poland (it's the family tradition to be involved in a local club, he's the third generation). Formerly he was a coach in Norway (at Halden Tennisklubb).

Recently Adam was awarded as a Tournament Manager of the Year by Polska Liga Tenisa, an independent (and very inclusive) tournament federation for adult amateur players.

Adam says, "For me, MoT was an adventure, it made me think and work on my coaching from various angles. What I appreciated most was the chance to work under guidance and with help of Dr. Anne Pankhurst, can't think of a better mentor. I'd definitely recommend MoT to fellow pro's."



# NO STRINGS NO GAME

*Taylor Fritz*

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*8 FUNDAMENTAL*  
**SINGLES STRATEGIES**  
*AND HOW TO PRACTICE THEM*

by Edgar Giffenig

Unless players have a clear tactical goal for every point, they will not be able to play up to their potential. The good news is that there are only a limited number of strategic options in singles play. **Here is a list of 8 essential strategic concepts with some ideas on how to practice them.**

**1 Out-rally the opponent.** The goal here is to win the point by keeping the ball in play until the opponent misses, so consistency and depth are essential. Drills:

- 1) One player hits crosscourt and the other down the line. Try to see how many balls they can hit without mistake.
- 2) Players play “no winner” points. Players are allowed to place the balls, but going for an out-right winner is forbidden. If a player happens to hit a winner through a series of placed shots, the point counts. *Variation:* Players play points in which they are not allowed to hit the ball inside the service boxes. The focus is on depth.

**2 Force the opponent.** This strategy involves being aggressive from the start of the point, hitting hard and trying to catch balls early. Drills:

- 1) The server has 3 serves (2 first serves) but has to win the point in three shots including the serve.
- 2) The server has one serve and the returner has to finish the point in 3 shots including the return.

**3 Play your strength.** The easiest way to improve your game without changing much is by hitting your best shot more often. Drill:

- 1) Mark the court so that the playing area measures about 2/3 the normal size of the court. Play points using only your best shot. That is, run around your weaker shot. If the opponent gets the ball to your weaker side, you lose the point. Normally your best shot will be your forehand, but it may not be.

**4 Play the opponent’s weakness.** Making the opponent hit his/her weaker shot as much as possible will definitely give you an advantage. Drill:

- 1) Play points where one of the players has to hit everything to one side of the court while the other one can hit to the whole court. This includes the serve. Start the point to a specific target. A good way to do this is to have the returner play every shot back to the side where the serve came from.

**5 Attack the net.** Putting pressure on the opponent by charging the net is a very useful strategy when playing consistent opponents or opponents that have a weak side. Drills:

- 1) Play points where the server has to serve and volley on first serves and the returner has to return and volley on second serves.
- 2) Play points crosscourt, where players can only hit down the line if approaching the net.

**6 Bring the opponent to the net.** Many players do not feel comfortable at the net and forcing them to come in will place them in a vulnerable position. Drill:

- 1) Play games where a drop shot winner is worth 3 points and winning the point against a net player, 2 point.

**7 Use variety to promote mistakes or short balls.** Having to continually adjust is much more difficult than returning similar shots over and over. Variety is a great way to force the opponent to make mistakes or give you short balls that you can attack. Drill

- 1) Play points where players are not allowed to hit the same type of shot twice. Players have to change the spin, height and depth every shot.

**8 Open the court.** In general, the player that has to move more will lose. Opening the court with angles is a great way to force mistakes or create opportunities to hit winners. Drill:

- 1) Play points where players are not allowed to move past the doubles sideline or a prolongation of it past the baseline. If one player forces the opponent out of the doubles court the point is over. The drill is a great way to work on angles and at the same time to work on moving diagonally to the ball to catch it early early avoiding stretching over the doubles sideline.

Focusing on these 8 strategic concepts is a great way to simplify tactical training and prepare your players to play against any opponent. The drills are only examples. You can easily come up with other options to work on the different fundamental strategies.



*Edgar Giffenig was a highly ranked junior in Mexico and played for the University of Texas where he completed an undergraduate degree in business and a graduate degree in exercise physiology.*

*Starting as an assistant coach in his alma mater, Edgar has been coaching high performance players for the last 25 years. He was a national coach for the USA, Germany and Mexico. He has been a speaker at many national and international coaches conventions (ITF, PTR, ITA, USTA, DTB, FMT) and is a partner in TennisGate, a player development media company.*



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 February 27 Orlando, FL  
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# ABOUT MY TENNIS JOURNEY *with Subhan Khan*

My name is **Subhan Khan** and PTR has done so much for my teaching and coaching career. I am a PTR Certified Professional in Adult Development and Junior Development. And right now, I've travelled across the globe after seeing a job in the PTR Job Bulletin. I am currently teaching in the Cayman Islands in the western Caribbean.

I started my tennis life in 1995 as a ball boy. Unfortunately, it could not continue for long as I suffered injury and had to take a gap of two years. These two years gap with this injury took me off my career as a tennis player. However, it did not dent my passion for tennis and made me switch to Coaching.

I grew my interest in coaching and started training kids. In order to improve and gain in depth knowledge of this sport, I went to do my first coaching course of PTR. It brought many good opportunities like working with Cosmic Sport Centre, Peninsula Tennis Academy.

The first big break came my way when I did my 2nd coaches course in 2006 (PTR Adult Development). I was fortunate to work with **Dr. Ludovik Cap**, obtaining Professional status.

Along with this journey, I kept myself up to date by attending regular courses like ITF Level 1 in 2008.

I got a chance to work under Davis Cup team coach **Mr. Nandan Bal**, who was a former Davis Cup player. While working with Mr. Bal at one of his centers as a head Coach in Mumbai, I produced many good players.

After 4 exhausting but enjoyable years of coaching, I came back to Delhi and started working with Delhi Lawn Tennis Association in 2012.

I kept moving forward and attended many coach courses.

I worked with the Davis Cup Team as a manager in the Year 2013-14. My vast experience strengthened me to start my own program with Peninsula tennis academy and I ran it for 3 years at IIT Delhi.

In the Year 2015, I completed my Junior Development coaches' course and got the Professional Certification. Throughout my journey, I attended many National and Inter-National workshops and added many more coaches courses to my belt.

Last but not the least, one more opportunity came my way to attend PTR coaches Education program as an Indian Tester in 2019 with one of the best tutors, **Iñaki Balzola**.



I would like to thank PTR for such an expansive education system for Coaches, Players and for Parents.

I am proud to be PTR. My regards to all my fellow members,

Subhan Khan, India



PTR announced its new certification designation of “PTR-Certified Director of Racquet Sports” after signing an agreement with the University of Florida’s Professional Tennis Management program, which offers the country’s only Director of Racquet Sports education curriculum.

PTR announced its new certification designation of “PTR-Certified Director of Racquet Sports” after signing an agreement with the University of Florida’s Professional Tennis Management program, which offers the country’s only Director of Racquet Sports education curriculum.

PTR professional-level members, who complete either the UF Director of Racquet Sports Certification continuing education course or a UF Masters in Sports Management with a specialization in Director of Racquet Sports, can earn the elite designation of “PTR-Certified” Director of Racquet Sports.

Certified professionals are encouraged to earn the new designation of PTR-Certified Director of Racquet Sports to develop their careers and show their qualifications for leadership positions. UF’s online Sport Management Masters degree is recognized as the best in the country, and, in 2021, it added a new specialization in Director of Racquet Sports leadership. The curriculum content was created by a team of seasoned industry experts, initiated by **Len Simard**, PTR consultant and leading search and recruiting executive in the racquets industry. The UF PTM program is directed by former Gator NCAA All-American tennis player **Kim Bastable**, along with club industry expert **Doug Cash**, a 35-year veteran leader, who serves as adjunct professor.

Information on the full UF online Sport Management masters, rated by bestcolleges.com as the leading Sport Management Masters program in the country, is located at <https://sm.hhp.ufl.edu/>.

The UF coursework is entirely online and flexible for various lifestyles and current work situations. Content includes curriculum readings, video interviews with experts, and even though it’s online, it still includes social connectivity with peers, industry veterans, and instructors. Participants can work at their own pace.



Information and application details for the continuing education course are located at [www.UF-PTR.com](http://www.UF-PTR.com).



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# CONGRATULATIONS to the first course graduates of the UF Director of Racquet Sports Certification Course:

**Julian Wortelboer, of Key Biscayne, FL,  
Jeremy Carl of Springfield, VA. and  
Joao Pinho of Flushing, NY**

**Julian** is the **first** graduate of the new University of Florida online Director of Racquet Sports Certification course.



Julian, Director of Racquet Sports at the Ocean Club in Key Biscayne, FL, completed the course in about 4 months, including passing the certification exam. He worked at his own pace during his busy summer camps, investing about 75 hours of total time.

Julian had this to say about the certification. "The UF Director of Racquet Sports Certification was extraordinary; one of a kind. The level of knowledge I acquired during the class was priceless. The certification pushed me to write, analyze, think, debate and, most importantly, learn invaluable information that I will use during my professional career."



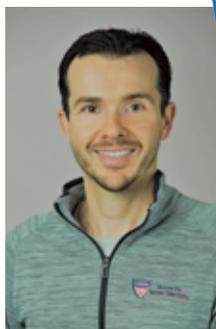
Also graduating with the Dir. of Racquets Certification is **Jeremy Carl**, a PTR Professional, USPTA Elite Professional and USTA High Performance Coach. He currently is Tennis Professional and Pickleball Director at Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria, VA where he also has 2 Platform Tennis courts. Jeremy has co-authored two books

***The Complete Player: A Brit and a Texan Navigate the Junior Tennis Journey*** and

***The Complete Coach: A Brit and a Texan Solve the Coaching Puzzle.***



**Joao (Jay) Pinho** is the most recent graduate of the UF DORS program. He is the Head Tennis Professional at the USTA BJK National Tennis Center. Jay is a 15-year member of PTR and has obtained his PTR Master of Tennis in Performance.



Jay remarked, "The Director of Racquet Sports Certificate Program is a great way to gain more knowledge and learn from industry's leaders. The course covers a wide range of topics that are crucial for successfully leading a racquets program and can be completed at one's own pace. I definitely recommend anyone seeking to take on leadership roles to pursue this program."



**UF** | Director of Racquet Sports  
Sport Management  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

West Coast Location



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## Schedule of Events

AWARDS BANQUET | NOV. 10 | 6PM

PTR SYMPOSIUM BEGINS | NOV. 11 | 7AM

TRADE SHOW | NOV. 11

RECOGNITION BREAKFAST PRESENTED BY USTA | NOV. 12

HEAD PENN DINNER | NOV. 13



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NOV. 13 & 14

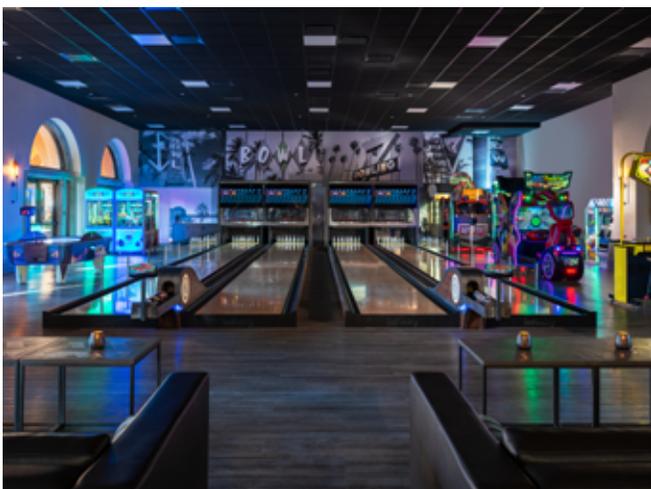
**PTR.**  
**LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE**

NOV. 10

# AMAZING RATES & VIEWS

## WESTIN MISSION HILLS RESORT & SPA

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*The 2022 PTR International Tennis Symposium has moved to November 10-13<sup>th</sup> at Indian Wells.*

*The beautiful Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa will provide an amazing venue for all the education, networking, camaraderie and more!*

*And our **special rate room rate of only \$195** is amazing for this perfect climate and world renowned property! Book early to get that special room rate, with Resort Fee Waived and free parking too.*

*PTR Awards Banquet, Trade Show and Demo Courts, HEAD Penn Dinner Party, and an incredible lineup of speakers will be there for you!*

*We look forward to seeing you in November in the desert for PTR Symposium 2022.*

# COMPETITION ROUTINE BETTER PER

Professional tennis players establish a specific set of actions that are called routines. Think about Novak Djokovic, who bounces the ball multiple times before the serve or Maria Sharapova who turns her back to the court and walks off the baseline prior to starting the point. Routines can be verbal, such as saying a positive word or phrase; physical, such as performing racket swings; or visual, for example looking at the strings on the racket. Consistent behaviors help athletes to stay focused, deal with negative emotions, and maintain desired intensity levels. They bring the sense of familiarity and consistency to the performance. Players perform these actions when preparing for the match, between the points, during the changeovers and after the game. Here are twelve routines, sometimes known as rituals, that players of all levels can use during the match.



**Fix the strings.** This is a great routine task to perform between the points. It helps to bring the attention to the object (strings) and eliminate any distractions or unnecessary thoughts. While fixing the strings, you remove the traces of the previous point and concentrate on the next one.

**Use the towel.** Prepare the towel at the fence behind the court on the side that you are playing. Wipe your face or hands with it after a difficult point or mistake. Besides eliminating the sweat, using a towel helps you to get a longer break, regain focus, and move on. During the changeover put the towel on your head and close your eyes. It will remove any distractions and relax the tired mind.



**Perform a physical action.** This is a common routine for the elite players. Physical action can be a sprint, quick jumps, or simply bouncing the feet. It is usually done at the beginning of the match or after the changeover,

and it's an effective way to get your heart and nervous system ready for the heat of the battle.



**Turn your back to the court.** The point, won or lost, is over; turn, walk to the fence, take few deep breaths, and briefly strategize for the next point. This is also a good tip for players who are struggling with negative emotions.

**Develop a breathing routine.** Deep breathing is a good relaxation and stress relieving technique. Take a few slow deep breaths between the points when you are feeling anxious. On the other hand, when you require an extra boost, make short quick exhalations through your nose. It will give you more energy. Breathing correctly helps to maintain the optimal intensity level throughout the match.

**Change shirt/socks.** Always prepare a few extra shirts and socks for the game. During the tennis match players sweat a lot and playing in the wet clothing is uncomfortable. Replacing the socks is a proven way to get additional energy when feeling tired. A fresh shirt can help you to recharge and may serve as a reminder of the new start after a lost set. Players usually change clothing at the changeovers or between the sets.



**Visualize.** Before the point starts, briefly imagine the tactical intention. Visualize where you will place a serve or return and the second shot after, how aggressive will you play, what your opponent is likely to do. Keep your visualization brief, only for the first few shots of the point. During the changeovers, imagine yourself playing the next few games with confidence and a positive attitude, hitting clean shots, and responding to dif-



# MOVES AND RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

by Dmytro Kovalevych

difficult situations with courage. Visualization is a great mental technique that without a doubt will benefit your performance!



**Bounce the ball before the serve.** This is a part of a ritual for many tennis players. Some athletes bounce the ball to prepare themselves mentally for the point, while others slow down the pace of the game to break the rhythm of the opponent. Rushing the serve is not desirable, as it can disrupt the flow and lead to a mistake. Bounce the ball a couple of times before the serve to concentrate, catch your breath, and visualize the serve.

**Tie your shoelaces.** Whether you need to erase a bad point from memory, regain your focus, or catch your breath, tying the shoelaces can be a good option. This ritual can also be used against the opponents in the situations when they are winning point after point. Stopping to tie the shoelaces (even when they are tied), can slow down the opponent and change the momentum in your favor. Retying the shoes once every couple of games is fine, but refrain from doing it too often, as there is a time limit between the points.

**Say a positive word or phrase.** Positive self-talk during the match is important. The cues can be instructional, such as “move your feet” or motivational, such as “come on”. The brain receives the information, and then sends it to the body, so tell yourself what to do instead of what not to do. When you say “I can do it”, but don’t really think this way, it won’t really help. As you say it, try to visualize and feel it as well!



I CAN DO IT!

**Use a toilet break after the set.** According to the rules, you have a right to leave the court, and use the restroom after the set. A good time to do it is after you just lost the set, feeling frustrated and helpless, you may need to change something in your game. Go to the restroom. Wash your face. Calm down, put your head together. Analyze and come up with a plan for the next set. Remember that the new set is a fresh start. Always tell the referee or the opponent that you decided to use a bathroom break.

**Perform a shadow swing.** After a mistake, practice a shadow swing with a correction. As an example, you missed the ball at the net and felt that not hitting enough under the ball caused the error. Immediately practice the swing visualizing how you play under the ball and over the net. Note that your actions during the match should be automatic and you won’t think about the technique much, but quick shadow swing correcting what you think caused the mistake may prevent the same error from happening in the future.



Competition routines are essential for maximizing performance. Try any of these techniques and see which one’s work best for you. Elite athletes tend to stick to their match routines while less successful players vary their behaviors. Stay consistent with your performance habits for the best results.

*Dmytro Kovalevych is a PTR certified Professional from Ukraine. He has 10 years of coaching experience – coaching high performance players in the Ukraine, Lithuania and USA. He is an ITPA certified specialist and is USPTA certified. Dmytro played Division I college tennis at South Carolina State University and competed on the ATP Tour.*





## CERTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

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DATE	LOCATION	LEVEL	LANGUAGE
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March TBA	Dubai, UAE	1	English
March 1-3, 2022	Mexico City, Mexico	1	Spanish
March 4-6, 2022	Mexico City, Mexico	2	Spanish
March 11-13, 2022	Rome, Italy	1	Italian
April 29 - May 1, 2022	Taranto, Italy	1	Italian
June 3-5, 2022	Brescia, Italy	1	Italian
September 23-25, 2022	Castelfranco V., Italy	1	Italian

\*\* Partial List. Refer to [pcrpadel.org](http://pcrpadel.org)

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# **USING GAMES TO KEEP PRACTICE** *FRESH & FUN*

by Mitch Case

# Tug of War

A couple of years ago, my friend and colleague, Dave Marshall, introduced me to the “Tug of War” scoring system. He first played with this type of scoring while in college, in a game called “6-pack,” and it’s likely been around for some time (so, we don’t know who to credit it to, unfortunately).

We love using it in our team practices as it’s close enough to the feel of standard scoring, but different enough to mix things up.

Here’s how it works:

1. The court starts with a single number score (ie “3”)
2. When Team A wins a point, they add to the score
3. When Team B wins a point, they subtract from the score



4. Team A is trying to move the score to 6
5. Team B is trying to move the score to 0

6. Teams switch sides and/or roles when a game is completed.

While the game could be played with a starting score of “0,” and play to +3 and -3, we’ve found it’s easier to call out positive numbers during play (the score should be announced at the beginning of every point).

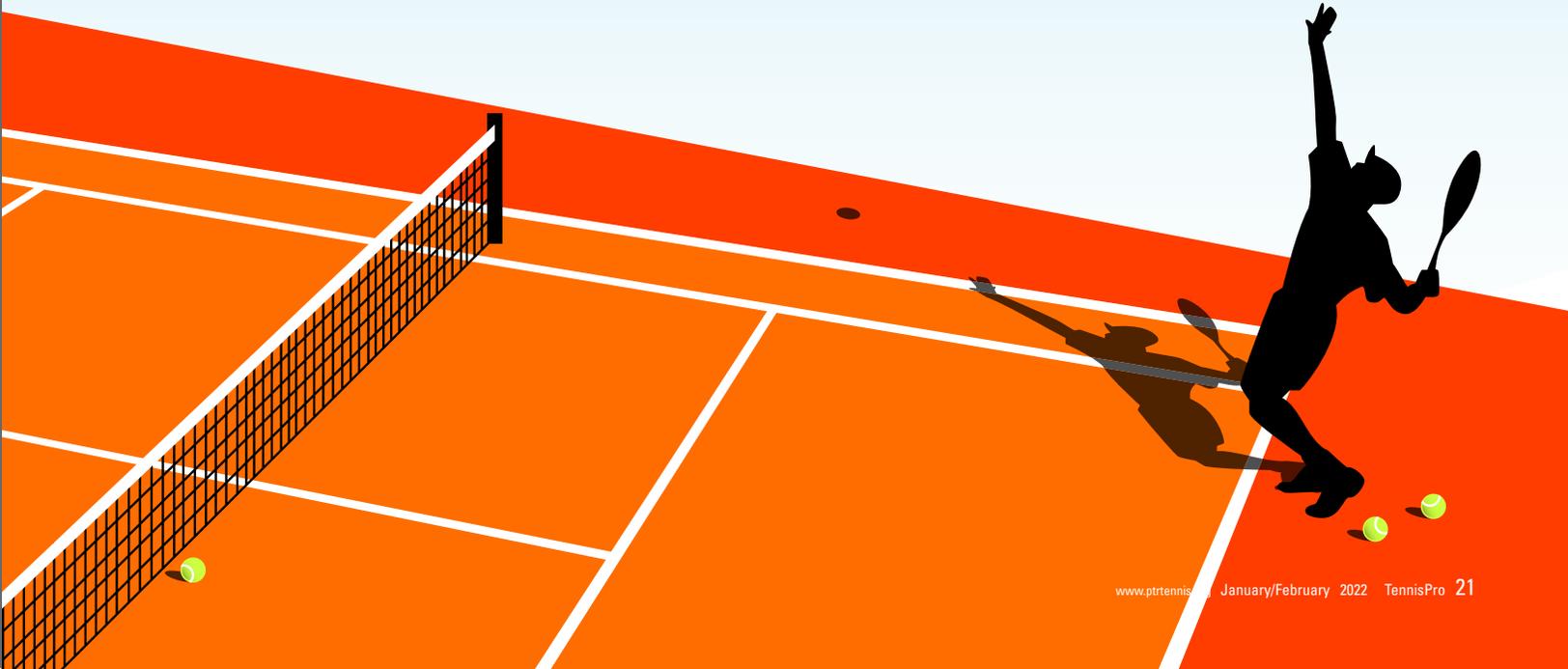
*Remember, use games to keep your practices fresh and fun!*

Let us know how you might modify these rules to take it to a new level!



*Mitch is the Director of Tennis at Woodridge Lake in Goshen, CT. Mitch wears many hats as he is also a Staff Pro at Farmington Valley Racquet Club; Head Coach of the Northwestern Regional 7 High School Boys Tennis Team; a Coach Developer for the PTR; a certification tester for the USRSA; and a member of Tennis Magazine’s Playtester Panel.*

*Mitch achieved his Master of Tennis in Junior Development from the PTR in 2020, and is a certified ITPA Tennis Performance Trainer and Kovacs Institute certified Tennis Serve Specialist.*





# LEADERS *EAT* LAST

by Jarrett Chirico

The rise of the racquets industry has changed the scope of importance of racquets in the field of country club hospitality. Accompanying this evolution is a greater demand on staff and even greater demand on our leaders. The opportunity has never been better and the path to success has proven to be crystal clear. As leaders, the most important thing we can do is to be first to the front line, but last to the finish line. You must expect more but give more than ever before. At its core, leadership must always come from the heart.

The idea of mentorship has a long history stretching back to the beginnings of mankind. In the simplest of terms, it is a person of success guiding others along that same path to maximizing their possibilities and potential. However, many leaders are quick to talk and slow to listen. Mentorship is best approached as a two-way street.

**A good mentor knows that those under his or her guidance will ultimately move on to achieve their highest success, and a teacher gets no greater feeling of fulfillment than watching their students continue to rise on their journey to the top**

It is never easy to lose someone we invest in since we give a part of ourselves to truly lift up those around us. We often give up time with our families and extend already long days, but the cost of leadership is frequently sacrifice—sacrifice for the people around us that we choose to invest in. It is never perfect timing when someone you have mentored is ready to test their own wings and it is exceptionally rare to be completely prepared for the best things in life. The truly great opportunities are the ones that force you to grow to fulfill them. I have been a Director for over a decade and only once have I started a position I felt I was 100% prepared for. However, I am proud to say I have succeeded at the highest level in every one of my positions. I have found this success through a consistent combination of dedication, investment, and most of all belief.

As leaders, we must cultivate unwavering belief and instill that same belief in the people we mentor. Instead of telling them “You are not yet ready,” tell them “I am here to support you at every turn.” A leader inspires people daily and makes those they support feel that their helping hand is available at any time. Leadership is less about glory at the surface and more about leading from behind. It is leading while at the same time taking a backseat to let others shine. If you are in a leadership position you are responsible for the overall success of your program. When your programs succeed, it is a reflection of your success. When your people succeed, it is a reflection of your success. Rather than be threatened by others’ success, celebrate, and promote it! I view my greatest career accomplishments to be the success of the people I have had a lasting impact on. I attempt to fuel a culture of high expectations and celebrate that high success when it is achieved.

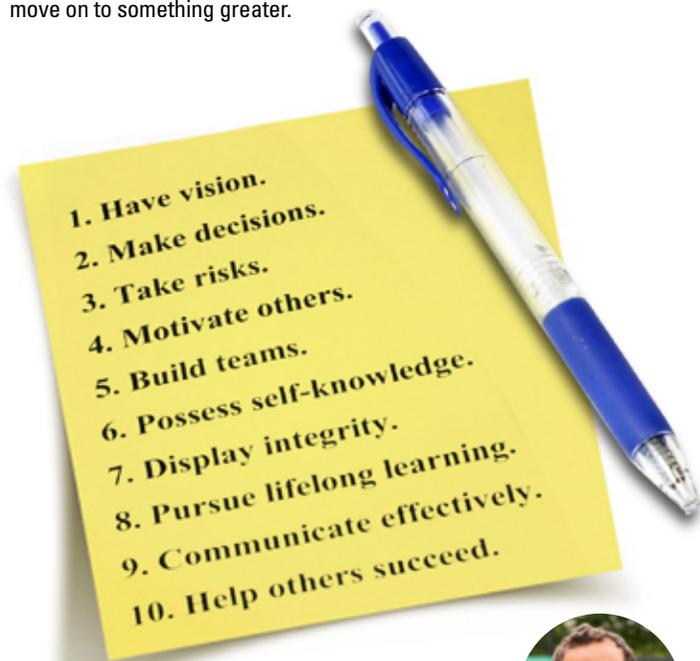
Racquets has changed the balance at clubs across the country. Without question, racquets offers more entry points, and more overall overlap than any other amenity at a club. It is the numerous options that racquets provide through sports such as tennis, paddle, pickleball, squash etc. that bring members of all backgrounds to the club. It is these options that hold appeal and value, which brings new members to the club.

These opportunities apply to membership but apply just as much to staff. This is what I refer to as, “growth through racquets”. Growth through racquets is the understanding that each racquet sport complements and grows the others. The more options that are provided, the more opportunities we give ourselves for success.

This growth is also personal, particularly when it comes to leadership. The more opportunities we are given, the greater the responsibility to make the most of them. The ever-growing offerings in racquets require a deeper education in each sport and how they fit together as a whole. We must be able to teach, program, staff, and connect the dots throughout all racquet sports. This adds additional pressure to the job, but the payoff is well worth the effort. As racquets grows, so does interaction with new members. It is essential that we make the most of our interactions and turn them into positive possibilities. As the saying goes, you only get the opportunity to make a first impression once, and every new member interaction is an opportunity to shape an experience and create memories.

To continue to grow as a leader you must become accustomed to saying goodbye. In many ways it is far easier to help someone on their way up than to help them on their way out. How we part ways and continue to support someone, even long after they have gone, is what separates a mature leader. It tells much about one’s character and leaves a lasting impression on those around us. I have always told my staff that they have my indefinite support, whatever path they ultimately choose to take.

I will always be there to have a conversation, offer a hand, or give advice. I only ask that I receive the same respect and support in return. There are very few great opportunities in life; as a leader we must help others to recognize their goals and give them the courage to go after their dreams. Anyone can lead, but not everyone is a true leader. In my experience, there is no greater feeling of success and pride than helping someone grow and move on to something greater.



*Jarrett Chirico is the Director of Racquets at Royal Oaks Country Club in Dallas, TX. He has directed many top tier tennis and paddle programs in the Northeast and the largest pickleball program in the country retaining over 1,000 people weekly. He is currently one of the best pickleball players in the world and the founder of clay court pickleball.*

*He was awarded (PTR) Professional of the year by Racquet Sports Industry (RSI) magazine and Professional Pickleball Registry's (PPR) 2020 Pro of the year as well as being one of the 2020 Champions of Pickleball.*

*In addition, he holds certifications from the USPTA, PTR, PPR, PPTR and the PPTA as well as being a national pickleball (PPR) clinician and PPR Vice Chairman.*

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*THE HIGH SCHOOL OFFSEASON -*  
**WHEN THE MAGIC HAPPENS...**  
*OR DOESN'T*

by Marvin Hedgepeth

High school athletics are typically divided into three seasons- **fall**, **winter** and **spring**. Including tryouts, preseason and postseason play, each of these seasons may last for about three months. This leaves many months when athletes can either remain conditioned and active in their sport (or some other sport), or they can choose to become less physically active during the long offseason. Family and academic commitments will play a major role in determining how much time can be devoted to athletics.

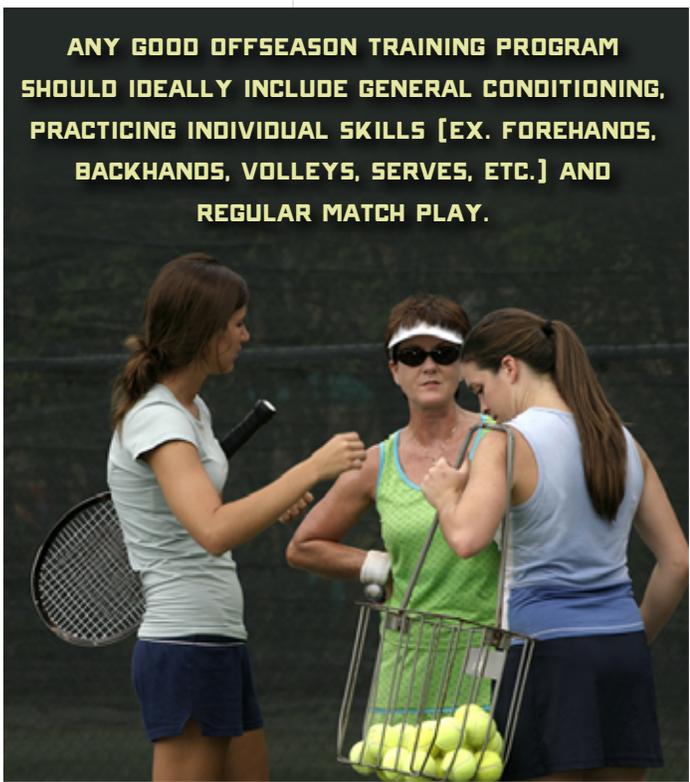
Tennis players at the high school level, like other athletes, must allot the majority of their time to maintaining an acceptable academic standing, and parents are responsible for assuring that student-athletes properly manage their time. However, parents may or may not be major advocates for offseason training. With a well-timed little nudge from a caring coach, parents may be enlisted to encourage and even monitor offseason efforts. Some may even relish the chance to become actively involved in their child's quest to improve their tennis skills. Securing parental buy-in cannot be over-emphasized for certain practical considerations such as providing transportation when needed. *Parents are clearly in a position to either make or break a student-athlete's attempts at pursuing offseason training.*

At the collegiate level, tennis players are much more likely to have more structured offseason activities such as regular weight training, conditioning, and even invitational tournaments. Failing to follow an effective offseason regimen at this level could ultimately cost a student-athlete his/her scholarship.

An effective offseason training plan for a high school tennis player doesn't necessarily have to be very expensive (ex. private lessons, camps or academies) or time-consuming. It should be designed in the context of a player's predetermined goals. These goals can be quite modest (ex. to move from the number 5 position to the number 4 position in the line-up for the upcoming season), or they can be rather extreme (ex. successfully switching from a 2-handed to a single-handed backhand). The form that an offseason program will take is limited only by one's imagination and the availability of certain basic resources. Tennis court availability is usually not a problem, but in instances where this is the case, hitting walls or the side of a building may suffice. Skills such as proper volley technique can actually be practiced indoors in front of a full-length mirror without benefit of tennis balls. Likewise, shadow groundstrokes can be practiced in any suitably-sized space indoors or outdoors. During periods of inclement weather, athletes can seek to become more of a student of the game by using instructional resources on outlets such as YouTube.

Offseason training can involve cross-training in other sports. This is quite common at the high school level. Whereas the other sport may not improve tennis technique, it should, at least assist in maintaining a suitable level of conditioning. Any good offseason training program should ideally include general conditioning, practicing individual skills (ex. forehands, backhands, volleys, serves, etc.) and regular match play. For match play, athletes may get involved with UTR (Universal Tennis Rating) or an area league in an attempt to procure regular competitive matches.

Sadly, neglecting offseason training has some predictable consequences from a coach's perspective. Student-athletes guilty of this neglect tend to show little or no growth as players from year to year. It seems that the muscle memory acquired during a short season is lost during long offseason periods. This results in the coach spending huge amounts of time reteaching basic skills during practice rather than practicing more advanced techniques and match strategies. Additionally, athletes who have not maintained good physical conditioning during the offseason seem to be more prone to over-use injuries, especially during the initial weeks of team practices. These over-use injuries often require extensive physical therapy that may render the athlete unable to compete for weeks at a time.

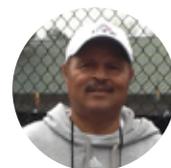


**ANY GOOD OFFSEASON TRAINING PROGRAM SHOULD IDEALLY INCLUDE GENERAL CONDITIONING, PRACTICING INDIVIDUAL SKILLS (EX. FOREHANDS, BACKHANDS, VOLLEYS, SERVES, ETC.) AND REGULAR MATCH PLAY.**

Coaches should encourage student-athletes to maintain a comprehensive log to include a record of all time

invested in conditioning, specific skill practice, video study and match play (with results). Establish a group of like-minded teammates who are also serious about documenting offseason training. Have them share their experiences regularly using a group chat or email. By the first day of tryouts or practice, these logbooks will reveal who has and hasn't put in the time during the offseason. Tennis is like so many other endeavors in life- "**as ye sew, so then shall ye reap**". You can make steady progress from year to year, but if you're not working on your tennis skills during the offseason, expect your level of play to drop. It's a very slippery slope!

*Marvin is a PTR-certified Instructor and PTR Century Coach with more than 400 career victories as a high school tennis coach. During his more than 30 years of active PTR membership, he has participated in the Visiting Tennis Professional Program in Jamaica on multiple occasions. Currently, Marvin is the Varsity Boys' and Girls' Tennis Coach at Hampton Roads Academy in Newport News, Virginia.*





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- Use techniques to encourage player reflection and development and utilize self-reflection to explore the effectiveness of their own role

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### **Virtual**

*April 7 & 14 | 11AM-3PM EST*

### **Reston, VA**

*April 9 & 10 | 9AM-5PM*

### **Virtual**

*April 11 & 18 | 10AM-2PM EST*

### **Virtual**

*April 15 & 22 | 9AM-1PM EST*

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*April 16 & 23 | 10AM-2PM EST*

### **Rochester, MN**

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# International Member



CHINA



10 and Under Workshop conducted by George Qian in Shanghai Nov 20-22nd, 2021.



An Adult Development Workshop was conducted by Adams Zhao RuiFeng in Beijing on October 21-23rd.

# News



 ITALY



International Master Pro, Luigi Bertino, (far right standing) conducted this PTR Performance Certification Workshop in November in Palazzolo, Italy



Youth Performance Expert, Ruben Neyens was in Rome, Italy to conduct the Kids Tennis Course for these top coaches.

# International Member News



## Germany



International Master Professional, Herbert Schnaubelt (far right standing) conducted this recent workshop in Duisburg, Germany in November 2021. The 10 & Under Certification was enjoyed by this group which included many excited young pros.

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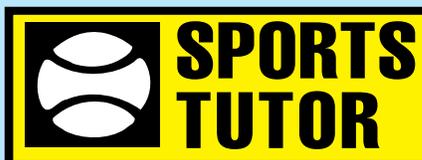


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# ASK THE EXPERT

**Q** My players are asking for proper ball machine training tips. Any suggestions?

## TARGETS

- Once any target is placed on the court the player tends to tighten up. Through repetition with a given shot and target area, you will become comfortable hitting a particular shot in practice and especially in match situations.
- I like to use 8" target cones in areas of four cones. The area size of the target should be based on the shot selected as well as the skill level of the player. You should hit your target area 70% of the time for an effective practice session. If you are hitting your targets more frequently than 70%, try shrinking the targets first.

## BALL FREQUENCY

- If the ball machine frequency is not set correctly, you are just grooving poor footwork habits in practice. Most players set the ball frequency of the ball machine too slow to accommodate how they want to feel while practicing instead of simulating game-play. The ball machine should be throwing another ball as your ball passes the front of the ball machine. This timing simulates a player actually striking another ball.

## POSITION OF THE BALL MACHINE

- The position of the ball machine is the most important tip you can receive with regards to training with a ball machine. Players tend to always place the ball machine in the center of the baseline. It is rare that the ball ever comes from there in a match especially for those who play doubles. You should place the ball machine where the shot would come from in a match

## SPEED, SPIN, HEIGHT, DEPTH, DIRECTION

- Ball machines can really enhance your ball recognition skills. Ball recognition is your ability to judge the ball in flight early enough to play the ball in the appropriate strike-zone for your out-going shot. Most players when training on a ball machine only practice their forehand or backhand rally ball. Practicing just your rally ball would be like going to a driving range and never practicing anything but your driver.



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January 28 - Weston, CT (Completed)

February 6 - Louisville, KY

February 27 - Wilmington, DE

March 20 - Long Island, NY

April 3 - Chicago, IL

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